HE CHRISTMAS CHILD

ORA · ARCHIBALD · SMITH

Library

THE UNITED LIBRARY
2121 Sheridan Road
Evanston, Illinois 60201

Garrett-Evangelical
Theological Seminary
2121 SHERIDAN ROAD
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS 60201

THE UNITED LIBRARY
2121 Sheridan Road
Evanston, Illinois 60201

Garrett Biblical Institute
Evanston, Illinois

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024

https://archive.org/details/christmaschildot0000nora

THE CHRISTMAS CHILD
AND OTHER VERSE FOR CHILDREN

CHRISTMAS SECRETS (*page* 27)

THE CHRISTMAS CHILD

AND OTHER

VERSE FOR CHILDREN

BY

NORA ARCHIBALD SMITH

AUTHOR OF "THE HOME-MADE KINDERGARTEN," "THREE LITTLE MARYS," "UNDER THE CACTUS FLAG," ETC.

With Illustrations

BOSTON AND NEW YORK

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

The Riverside Press Cambridge

1920

COPYRIGHT, 1920, BY NORA ARCHIBALD SMITH

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Garrett Biblical Institute
Evanston, Illinois

PZ8.3
.S655
1920
GETS

TO MY MOTHER

(A Christmas Wish)

This is the day of the Mother and Child,
Of Blessed Babe and of Mary mild;
Centuries old yet eternally young,
Chanted in praises of every tongue, —
  Lily divine of Motherhood,
Child who has taught us Brotherhood!

This is the season of Mother and Child, —
Then let me wish for thee, mother mild,
Who of thy love didst bring me here,
Gave me this life that I hold so dear,
  All that thy heart can treasure,
  Joy beyond earthly measure!

"And I, for one, would much rather,
Could I merit so sweet a thing,
Be the poet of little children
Than the laureate of a king."

LUCY LARCOM

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS are made to the following periodicals in which these little verses for children first appeared: *The Ladies' Home Journal, The Outlook, The Interior, Little Folks, The Kindergarten and First Grade, The Housewife, The Churchman, American Primary Teacher, The Continent, John Martin's Book, Mother's Magazine, Woman's Home Companion, Sunday School Times, Youth's Companion, Woman's World, Table Talk, Journal of Education, St. Nicholas, Young People's Weekly, The Primary School, The Ladies' World.*

Also to Doubleday, Page and Company and Houghton Mifflin Company for permission to use verses which have appeared in their publications.

CONTENTS

To My Mother (A Christmas Wish)	v
The Christmas Child	1
The Christmas Travelers	2
Santa Claus is Coming!	4
Neighbors of the Christ-Night	6
The Benevolent Gnome	8
The Christ-Candle	11
The Good Fir-Tree	13
A Child's Christmas Carol	15
The Good Ship Santa Claus	16
Grace for Christmas Eve	19
Christmas Helpers	20
A Christmas Acrostic	23
The Man in the Moon	24
To a Child on Christmas	26
Christmas Secrets	27
How the Christ-Flower Bloomed	29
A Dear Little Boy	32
"L'Oiseau de Dieu"	35
Christmas in Norway	37
The Haughty Aspen	40

CONTENTS

Remember!	42
A New Year's Song	44
The Boastful Snowflake	46
The Goose Fair at Warsaw	47
The Fairy Ring	49
I wonder!	52
Everybody's Baby	54
Which is the Royal Baby?	56
Flower Song	58
Sweet Sleep	59
The Making of the Flag	60
The Answer of the Flag	63
Protect the Flag	66
A Collar of Honor	67
The Children's Ship	69
Soldier or Slacker	71
Learning to Knit	72
The Timid Oyster	74
Dinner-Time	76
The Wandering Eels	78
Easter Blossoms	81
The Life-Preservers	82
Talking through the Hat	84
The Day of the Dog	88
Meadow Talk	91

CONTENTS

Knocking on Wood	94
The Robin and the Angleworm	96
The Jolly Dugong	98
The Dandified Manatee	101
Young Sunday Hat	103
The Lollipop Bush	106
Difference in Tastes	108
The Word of a Gentleman	109
No Man's Land	112
Kamatu San and 'Lizabeth Ann	114
The Little 'Prentice Lad	116
The Sunflower's Story	120
A Banana Story	122
Song of the Carnahuba Palm	124
Little Dorrit's Playground	127
The Thread-and-Needle Tree	129
Peddling Poetry	132
The Little Artist	135
The Feast of the Doll	138
The Feast of Arms	139
The Feast of Laughter	141
The Doll's Calendar	144

ILLUSTRATIONS

Christmas Secrets	*Frontispiece*
The Presents he bought were a Wonderful Sight	8
"Go stand Thou in the Frozen Moon!"	24
The Geese are trooping to Warsaw	48
He is gravely saluted by each Bold Marine	68
Talking through the Hat	84
"My Pitcher! Will you mend it, Sir?"	110
The Feast of the Doll	138

The first two illustrations are redrawn from *John Martin's Book, the Child's Magazine*, the third from *Little Folks*, and the others from *St. Nicholas*, all with the kind permission of the editors.

THE CHRISTMAS CHILD

The Christmas child is a lovely child,
Though he be not fair of face,
For his heart is full of generous thoughts
And his eyes are full of grace.

The Christmas child is a helpful child,
Howsoever poor he live;
For his ears are lent to his brother's need,
And his hands outstretched to give.

THE CHRISTMAS TRAVELERS[1]

(A Christmas Processional)

I

To seek the Babe of Bethlehem,
  Three Kings of Orient came;
Wise Baltasar and Melchior,
  With Gaspar, great in fame.
Across the lonely desert
  They took their trackless way,
To find their King and worship Him
  That wondrous Christmas Day.
A heav'nly guide their Lord did send,
  A radiant jewel-star,
Serene and bright it journey'd on,
  And sent its rays afar.
Around the shepherds as they lay,
  It shed its glorious light;
The angels came in multitude,
  And fill'd the sky of night.
"Good-will," they sang, "to ev'ry man
  And glory in the height."

[1] Music from Mendelssohn, Opus 72, No. 1.

II

To seek the Babe of Bethlehem,
We come this Christmas Day,
A pilgrim band, our Promis'd Land,
The Manger where He lay.
No splendid robes enfold us,
No regal gifts we bring,
With simple faith we celebrate
The birthday of our King.
Oh, star divine, still shine on us,
Still let thy radiance burn,
Till into David's city
Our lowly footsteps turn!
There, like the shepherds, wondering,
We'll worship, kneeling still;
There, like the angel multitude,
Our song the heavens fill,
And tell the birth of peace on earth,
To men of gentle will.

SANTA CLAUS IS COMING!

Up among the chimneys high,
Hark the merry sound!
The reindeer's tramp, the ring of bells,
All the city round.
Santa Claus is coming with his pack of toys,
Santa Claus is coming to his girls and boys.
Santa Claus is coming; he'll be welcome here,
For he only comes to see us once a year!

Clad in fur from head to foot,
Warm and soft he goes,
With silver hair and dimpled chin,
Cheek that's like a rose.
Santa Claus is coming with his pack of toys,
Santa Claus is coming to his girls and boys.
Santa Claus is coming; he'll be welcome here,
For he only comes to see us once a year!

Stop the sleigh, the reindeer halt!
We are waiting here,
And every stocking's hanging up,
Come down, Santa dear!

SANTA CLAUS IS COMING!

Santa Claus is coming with his pack of toys,
Santa Claus is coming to his girls and boys.
Santa Claus is coming; he'll be welcome here,
For he only comes to see us once a year!

NEIGHBORS OF THE CHRIST-NIGHT

Remember, little dearest one,
The beasts on Christmas Day,
And give to each his bite and sup,
To each his meed of hay,
For so it was on the Christ-night.

Deep in the shelter of the cave,
The ass with drooping head
Stood weary in the shadow, where
His master's hand had led.

About the manger oxen lay,
Bending a wide-eyed gaze
Upon the little new-born Babe,
Half worship, half amaze.

High in the roof the doves were set,
And cooed there, soft and mild,
Yet not so sweet as in the hay,
The Mother to her Child.

The gentle cows breathed fragrant breath
To keep Babe Jesus warm,
While loud and clear, o'er hill and dale,
The cocks crowed, "Christ is born!"

NEIGHBORS OF THE CHRIST-NIGHT

Out in the fields, beneath the stars,
The young lambs sleeping lay,
And dreamed that in the manger slept
Another, white as they.

These were Thy neighbors, Christmas Child
To Thee their love was given,
For in Thy baby face there shone
The wonder-light of Heaven.

THE BENEVOLENT GNOME

An elderly gnome of benevolent turn
And master of treasures untold,
Once lived in a forest and guarded his mines
And stored up his jewels and gold.
Alone lived the gnome and no kindred had he,
No gnomelets to hand down his name;
No creature to cheer him, not even a cat,
No housemates to praise him or blame.
And Christmas was coming!
With none could he share,
No tree could he help to adorn,
No stocking replenish, no storeroom refill!
Was ever a gnome more forlorn?

But sudden one morning he happened to think,
Though kin in the wood he had none,
Yet neighbors in feathers and neighbors in fur
Were plenty as motes in the sun.
"The fox," thought the gnome,
"What a joy it would be

THE PRESENTS HE BOUGHT WERE A WONDERFUL SIGHT

To give him a plan of each farm,
A guide to each hen-roost adjoining his den
And thus to protect him from harm.
The owl," he thought, "is an excellent bird
Though somewhat addicted to gloom.
I'll buy him a grammar and teach him to say
No longer 'To who!' but 'To whom!'

"The squirrel is restless. Some potion or balm
Would quiet his nerves for a space;
A bottle of tonic would pleasure the fish
And set their cold blood in a race.
A cheese for the wood-mice I'll quickly procure;
A string of gay beads for the crow;
Some greens for the rabbit, some furs for the snake,
And skis for the buck and the doe."
With bark for his notebook, a thorn for his pen,
His list was soon plainly writ down,
And, clinking his money in holiday mood,
Our hero set out for the town.
The presents he bought were a wonderful sight,
They hung from each tree in the wood;
No beast was forgotten, no matter how small,
No bird, were he evil or good.

THE BENEVOLENT GNOME

The elderly gnome of benevolent turn
No longer was lonely or sad;
In sharing with others he'd found his content,
In gladdening, he was made glad.

THE CHRIST-CANDLE

A Song for Christmas Eve

I

'T is Holy Night in the hamlet olden,
Darkness lowers her curtain down;
With fingers of sleep the eyes are holden,
Naught is awake in the dreaming town.
Shineth one light in a cottage window,
Set for the Christ-child's tender feet,
Lest that they stumble, lest that they falter,
Passing to-night thro' the silent street.

Shine, sweet light, from thy humble dwelling,
Brightly beam on the toilsome way;
Long must he journey — the darling Christ-child —
Far and far has he still to stray.

II

The world is asleep and the world is weary,
Scarce it remembers the Holy Night;
Error and wretchedness, sinful, dreary,
Cover and darken the spirit-sight.

Stay not to come to us, blesséd Christ-child,
Tho' we be slumbering, tho' we forget,
Tho' they be scanty, the lights that await thee,
Heavenly Messenger, stay not yet!

Here is my light in my true heart's window,
Angel of Christmastide, come to me;
If thou wilt enter so lowly a chamber,
Here shall thy home and thy shelter be.

THE GOOD FIR-TREE

THERE were two little fir-trees that happened to grow
In the shade of the forest wide,
And one was a good tree and one was as bad
As you'd find in a day-long ride.
He never would listen, he never would mind
The words of the motherly tree;
And it need n't surprise you to learn he was soon
As crooked as crooked could be.

The good little fir-tree delighted to hear
The counsels of wisdom that fell
From the myriad lips of the motherly tree,
And he pondered them all right well.
"Strike deep with your rootlets," the mother advised;
"Hold firmly your head in the air;
There are wonderful things that may happen to come
To a fir-tree that's perfect and fair."

The bad little sapling was sulky and rude;
He said a fine tree never grew

In such a deep shade as that tangled-up wood;
He was bound to be crooked, he knew.
His needles they withered; he blighted at heart;
And his fate at the end it was dire;
For they pulled him up bodily, rootlet and crown,
And they used him to kindle the fire!

But oh, the good fir-tree, he never had hoped
And scarce could believe such a thing —
The children discovered his place in the wood
And round him they danced in a ring.
They carried him homeward, and — what do you think? —
'T was the happiest lot that could be, —
And fairest of fortunes that ever befell —
Why, they made him a Christmas Tree!

A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

WHAT is the fairest Christmas gift
A little child can bring?
A heart, as pure and white as plume
That drops from angel's wing.
Oh, glad hearts sing,
And joy bells ring,
In the bright December weather.

What is the sweetest Christmas song
A little child can sing?
A song of love, of heavenly love,
That flows for everything.
Oh, glad hearts sing,
And joy bells ring,
In the bright December weather.

What is the dearest Christmas tune
The belfry chimes can ring?
A birthday carol they can sound,
The birthday of the King.
Oh, glad hearts sing,
And joy bells ring,
In the bright December weather.

THE GOOD SHIP SANTA CLAUS

LET's take a shiny airship and let's name it Santa Claus,
And go a-whisking off across the blue,
And let's do a lot of errands for the very best of saints,
Who has n't time for all he wants to do.
There are polar bears complaining up among the northern snows
That they have n't any honey for their cubs;
And mother mermaids moaning on the bottom of the sea
'Cause they have to do their washing without tubs.
There are mud-larks by the dozen who, I 'm credibly informed,
Have never had a chance to lark in mud,
And sea cows ruminating where the water grasses grow,
Who have never had a new taste for their cud.
There are monkeys in menageries who tell me that it 's years
Since they had a single cocoanut to throw,
And that as for tails prehensile, they have nothing to prehense,
So the object 's a deception and a show.

There are jackdaws kept in cages with no single thing to steal,
And you know a daw would rather steal than eat;
There are kangaroos with pouches just as empty as a gourd
Who'd be pleased to fill them up with something sweet;
And centipedes who should, by rights, have long ago been shod,
Who've never even seen a boot or shoe,
And owls who keep protesting that they would n't be so dull
If they only had a lesson-book or two.
And we shan't forget the parrots, who with beaks designed to hook,
Never had an hour's fishing in their days,
Nor the bats, who, if they'd spectacles that really fitted well,
Would travel in more reputable ways.
What ho! What ho! the Santa Claus! Swoop down from out the sky!
We're ready with our bundles. Heave ahoy!
Stand fast and pack her solid to the very outer rim,
And tuck in every chink a Christmas toy.

As we skim across the water we will drop the presents in
For those who dare not venture on the land.
And when we reach the forest, we will hang them on the trees
And mark them so the least can understand.
What ho! What ho! the Santa Claus! The time is growing short —
Pull all the anchors up and let her go!
No beast must be forgotten from the East unto the West,
Nor from land of southern sun to land of snow.

GRACE FOR CHRISTMAS EVE[1]

The Baby born in Bethlehem
A sorry shelter had,
While we, who gather here to-night
Are warm and softly clad.

The Baby born in Bethlehem
Was fed on humble fare,
And yet our board is richly spread
With dainty food and rare.

Our beds are downy-smooth and white,
He slumbered in the hay;
'T is good that we remember this,
Each blesséd Christmas Day.

And good that we remember, too,
To pay our thanks and praise
To Heavenly Love that brought us here
And gave this Day of Days.

[1] From dramatic version of *The Birds' Christmas Carol*, by Kate Douglas Wiggin.

CHRISTMAS HELPERS

I WENT to the forest and asked of the trees,
As bowing and swaying, they bent to the breeze,
"Now, tell me, my brothers, now, tell, if you please,
Just what can you do for Christmas?"
And straightway they answered, the dark, lofty trees
As spicy and fragrant, they waved in the breeze,
"We're trying our best to grow tall, if you please,
We're trying to grow for Christmas!"

I passed by the draper's and saw in a box,
Such masses of stockings, both plain and with clocks;
And eager I asked them, "My sweet little socks,
Now what will you do for Christmas?"
And straightway they answered from out of their box,
Those stout-footed stockings, both plain and with clocks, —
"We'll try to fulfill the first duty of socks, —
We'll try to keep whole for Christmas!"

I entered the toy shop and said to the toys —
Such wonderful treasures for girls and for boys!

"You dear, pretty playthings, you holiday joys,
Pray, what will you do for Christmas?"
And straightway they answered, those shining new toys,
Those marvelous presents for girls and for boys,
"To play with a child is the chief of our joys;
We'll visit them all on Christmas."

To cloudland I wandered and asked of the snow,
As dancing and whirling, it sped to and fro,
"Now, tell me, fair snowflakes, — I long so to know,
Just what are your plans for Christmas!"
And straightway they answered, the soft flakes of snow,
As circling and floating, they flew to and fro,
"We think we should do the best thing, do you know,
If we fell thick and white for Christmas."

I climbed to the belfry and questioned the bell,
All murm'ring with sound, like the heart of a shell,
"Now, tell me, my silver-tongue, truthfully tell,
What song will you sing on Christmas?"
And straightway the resonant voice of the bell
All vibrant with sound like a tropical shell,

Replied, "The glad message I'll joyfully tell,
I'll ring the Good News on Christmas!"

I asked of the tapers, the stars and each light
That blooms in the heavenly garden of night: —
"Now, tell me, ye shining ones, lovely and bright,
What best can you do for Christmas?"
And straightway they answered, star, taper and light,
All blooming and fair in the garden of night; —
"O'er land and o'er ocean, we'll beam clear and bright,
We'll shine out our best for Christmas!"

A CHRISTMAS ACROSTIC

C AROLLERS singing at morning gray;
H olly and ivy in brave array;
R inging of bells in the tow'r aloft,
I ncense below and a chanting soft, —
S o should it be on Christmas!
T elling the tale of the Wonderful Child,
M ary, his worshiping Mother mild,
A ngels adoring in Heav'n above
S inging their praises of infinite love,

So should it be on Christmas,
Ever should be on Christmas!

THE MAN IN THE MOON

(A German Folk-Tale)

In Germany, the story goes,
Once lived a thieving peasant,
Who pilfered from his neighbor's stores
What to his taste was pleasant.
All in a garden, near at hand,
Some cabbages were growing,
And forth he slipped, one Christmas Eve,
No shame, no reverence, knowing,
To fill his basket in the dark,
When none abroad were going.

He still was pulling, might and main,
His greediness unbounded,
When on the hard and frosty road
A horse's tramp resounded.
White shone the steed, the rider white,
His face showed many a wrinkle;
Low bent the thief, for silver-bright
The stars began to twinkle.
"'T is good Saint Nicholas!" he cried,
"I hear his hand-bell tinkle!"

"GO STAND THOU IN THE FROZEN MOON!"

The stately Bishop drew his rein —
  He spied the peasant hiding;
"'T is Holy Christmas Eve," called he,
  "Thy guilt's the more abiding!
Go stand thou in the frozen moon,
  And come thou downward never!
So long as earth lasts, nothing shall
  Thee and thy booty sever!"

. . . . . .

Still in the moon the culprit dwells,
  'Mid cabbages forever!

TO A CHILD ON CHRISTMAS

(Acrostic)

C HILDREN should on Christmas be
H and in hand around a tree.
R inging voices should resound
I n a carol's joyful round,
S inging of the Baby born
T o the world on Christmas morn.
M usic such as this can say
A ll glad things in gladdest way;
S ongs of love on Christmas Day!

CHRISTMAS SECRETS

I JUST love secrets; it's such fun
To hint and whisper, hide and run,
And Christmas time of all the year
Is just when there's the greatest fear
That folks will find out what you're doin'
And bring your plans to rack and ruin.

My Christmas shoppin' — it's all done
And presents bought for every one.
Nobody knows exceptin' me
What all the things are goin' to be.
They're always askin', but I say:
"You'd better wait till Christmas Day!"

I've bought my father somethin' white
And thin and smooth; you fold it tight
And in your pocket is its house;
It snuggles there just like a mouse.
I told my father all of this,
But he says *he* can't guess what 't is!

CHRISTMAS SECRETS

My mother's present is to wear,
There's two of it, it's called a pair;
It's smooth and shiny, black and white,
It goes by day and goes by night.
My mother guessed a bird, with wings —
When ever did you hear such things!

I bought my sister somethin' red,
You tie it tight around your head;
It's silky-smooth as any rose.
What can it be, do you suppose?
My sister guessed a bathin' hat —
As if I'd give a thing like that!

They're not good guessers, though they're dear;
They'll never know my plans, that's clear.
When Christmas comes, what glad surprise
And thanks will shine from all their eyes.
There's not a clam down by the sea
Can hold his tongue so well as Me!

HOW THE CHRIST-FLOWER BLOOMED

(From a German Legend)

Dark was the sky that Christmas Eve,
The heavy clouds hung low;
The charcoal burner scarce could trace
His pathway through the snow.

Black Forest trees stood thick and tall,
Black Forest drifts were deep;
Yet light of heart he hastened home
The Christmas feast to keep.

A cheese of goat's milk, coarse black bread —
The morrow's scanty meal,
From prying frost and envious sleet
He struggled to conceal.

He stumbled on, when through the blast
A piteous cry was heard,
And close beside him, heaped in snows,
A wailing infant stirred.

"Now, who has laid thee here, sweet babe,
To perish in the storm?
'T is Christmas Eve; I'll take thee home,
My cloak shall wrap thee warm."

The tiny creature, as he spoke,
He gathered to his breast,
And there beyond, his cottage shone,
In Christmas firelight dressed.

Within the good-wife's tender arms
The shivering waif was set,
And children's faces bent above,
And eyes with pity wet.

Warm and content, the stranger babe
Gazed wondering o'er the room,
And spied at last the children's tree,
A Christmas rose in bloom.

Eager they ran to show the lights,
And round their treasure pressed;
When lo! a glimmering cloud of mist
Enwrapped the wondrous guest.

On silver-shining wings he rose,
His fair head bore a crown,
And vanishing, with baby hands
He wafted blessings down.

Next morning, where amid the snows
The Babe had made his bed,
Fair as a star, and dazzling white,
The Christ-Flower raised its head.

They bore it home, and every year
In depths of winter wild,
Chrysanthemums bloom in that cot,
Where came the Holy Child.

A DEAR LITTLE BOY

A GAY soldier-jacket,
A suitcase to pack it,
A box full of candy,
A fine Jack-a-dandy,
  Kind Christmas is bringing to me.
A red-crested Polly,
A garland of holly,
A nut and a raisin,
A fine trumpet brazen, —
  Oh, what a rich boy I shall be!

Some nails and a hammer
To make a fine clamor,
A pony to ride on,
Some stilts I can stride on,
  Kind Christmas is bringing to me.
A yellow canary
My pets for to vary,
A jar full of cookies,
Some nice picture-bookies, —
  Oh, what a rich boy I shall be!

A DEAR LITTLE BOY

Some sleigh-bells to jingle,
Like those of Kriss Kringle,
Two little black kittens,
A pair of red mittens,
  Kind Christmas is bringing to me.
A purse full of money,
A snowy-white bunny, —
A horse fit for rocking,
Some sweets for my stocking, —
  Oh, what a rich boy I shall be!

My trundle-bed scorning,
When comes the glad morning,
My gifts I'll find early,
With fine hurly-burly,
  What Christmas is bringing to me.
"Get up!" I'll be saying,
"I want to go playing!
My breakfast be hasting,
There's no time for wasting!"
  Oh, what a rich boy I shall be!

"And grandmother's 'fairing'?"
She's too old for caring!

"And wee sister Jennie?"
She's too small for any.
Kind Christmas is coming to ME!
"My father and mother?"
Oh, they will not bother,
If I am not sighing,
Nor fretting nor crying,
Oh, what a rich boy I shall be!

"L'OISEAU DE DIEU"[1]

(A Legend of Normandy)

When sweet Babe Jesus sleeping lay
And shivered with the cold;
The wee brown wren took thought to Him,
Her down she plucked and brought to Him,
Enwrapped Him, fold on fold.

When sweet Babe Jesus craved a robe,
A-couching in the hay,
Her own warm plumes she laid on Him,
A feathered garb she made on Him,
That blessed Christmas Day.

Babe Jesus lacked a coverlet;
The rude wind stole within;
The wren brought leaves and spread on Him,
Russet and gold she shed on Him,
And lapped Him softly in.

[1] God's Bird.

L'OISEAU DE DIEU

Dear bird of brown, thou tender heart,
  Thou gav'st the Babe thine all!
To praise thee is most meet to us,
Thy pitying deeds are sweet to us,
  God's blessing on thee fall!

CHRISTMAS IN NORWAY

A FLOCK of crows a caucus held
Upon a certain day,
And talked of many a sober theme,
In sober, serious way.

They touched on corn, on growing crops,
They praised the plough and hoe;
And bolder ones of scarecrows spoke
With bated breath and low.

At length, a crow advanced in years,
His speech a feeble caw,
Arose to tell of things that he
In foreign countries saw.

"One Christmas Day I chanced to be
In Norway," quoth the bird;
"And 't was the coldest winter wind
That e'er my feathers stirred.

"My mate was ill and could not fly,
And, anxious at her plight,
I pondered where to seek her food
Through all the bitter night.

"The morning broke on icy trees,
And fields adrift with snow,
And faint with hunger, numb with cold
I scarce knew where to go.

"Beyond the wood a farmhouse stood,
And there at length I flew,
Hoping to find a seed or crumb
To feed my mate so true.

"Wary, I flapped above the roof,
When, what my eyes should greet,
But, fixed to gable, door and gate,
Great sheaves of golden wheat!

"Behind the shining window-panes,
Stood children all a-row,
And happy voices eager cried,
'Bright Christmas! Master Crow!'

"Oh, blessings on those kindly folk
At Christmas evermore,
And blest be all that feed the birds
In Norway's rocky shore!"

He ceased. A chorus loud arose
From birds both far and near;
"Ah! would the children in this land
Provide such Christmas cheer!"

THE HAUGHTY ASPEN

(A German Legend)

As I went through the tangled wood
I heard the Aspen shiver.
"*What dost thou ail, sweet Aspen, say,*
Why do thy leaflets quiver?"

"'T was long ago," the Aspen sighed —
How long is past my knowing —
"When Mary Mother rode adown
This wood where I was growing.
Blest Joseph journey'd by her side,
Upon his good staff resting,
And in her arms the Heav'nly Babe,
Dove of the World, was nesting.
Fair was the mother, shining-fair,
A lily sweetly blowing;
The Babe was but a lily-bud,
Like to his mother showing.
The birds began, 'Thy Master comes!
Bow down, bow down before Him!'
The date, the fig, the hazel tree,
In rev'rence bent to adore Him.

I only, out of all the host
  Of bird and tree and flower, —
I, haughty, would not bow my head,
  Nor own my Master's power.
'Proud Aspen,' quoth the Mother-Maid,
  'Thy Lord, dost thou defy Him?
When emperors worship at His shrine,
  Wilt courtesy deny Him?'
I heard her voice; my heart was rent,
  My boughs began to shiver,
And age on age, in punishment,
  My sorrowing leaflets quiver."

Still in the dark and tangled wood,
  Still doth the Aspen quiver.
The haughty tree doth bear a curse,
  Her leaflets aye must shiver.

REMEMBER!

What's the very best rhyme for December?
Why, of course you must know 't is Remember!
Remember the snowflakes,
The green Christmas tree,
The red holly berries
Each season we see.
Remember! December! Remember!

What word do bells ring in December?
Why, of course you can hear 't is Remember!
Remember the carols,
The tinkle of sleighs,
The chickadee singing
In gloomiest days.
Remember! December! Remember!

What story is told in December?
To read it once is to remember,
Remember the manger,
The Baby that lay,
His sweet mother watching,
All cradled in hay.
Remember! December! Remember!

REMEMBER

What song do we sing in December,
When the birth of the Babe we remember?
The song of the angels,
We echo it still;
O'er all the earth singing
Of peace and good will.
Remember! December! Remember!

Garrett
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS

A NEW YEAR'S SONG

On New Year's Eve in England,
All in the olden day,
The children went a-caroling,
All in the olden way;
And ever as they journey'd on,
This chorus would you hear: —
"God send you happy, God send you happy,
Pray God send you a happy New Year!"

Across the fields and meadows
And through the frosty light,
While starry eyes and starry skies
Illumed the wintry night,
The children caroled blithely on,
In chorus sweet and clear: —
"God send you happy, God send you happy,
Pray God send you a happy New Year!"

Our days are sadly modern,
Our ways are modern, too;
But hearts still beat as high with love
As once they used to do —

So take the old-time message,
Good friends, both far and near:
"God send you happy, God send you happy,
Pray God send you a happy New Year!"

THE BOASTFUL SNOWFLAKE

A SNOWFLAKE remarked to his mother one day,
His calm sweet mother of cloud so gray,
"When *I* fall to earth, there's none but will know,
For I'll fall with a whiz, and a whir, and a go!
I'll pile up a drift by myself, all alone,
As high as a steeple and hard as a stone.
I'll roll up a snowball as round as the moon,
And big as the sun when he shines out at noon.
I'll make a great snow-man, so tall and so grand
He can hold a whole boy in the palm of his hand.
Here I go! See me fly! One and all, look at me!
I'm a Snowflake from Cloudland — at last I am free!"
He drifted to earth like a feather afloat,
A gallant young sailor, a breeze for a boat,
When a wonderful flower appeared to his view,
All dewy with fragrance, all brilliant of hue.
He longed to caress it, give one kiss so light,
He yearned just to touch it, and paused in his flight —
Alas, for the snowflake — ambition grew weak,
He died for the rose on a soft baby cheek!

THE GOOSE FAIR AT WARSAW

Hiss! Hiss! Quack! Quack!
The geese are trooping to Warsaw!
In Warsaw there's a giant Fair,
And through the chill December air,
O'er hills and uplands brown and bare,
Waddling here and waddling there,
The geese go forth to Warsaw.

Hiss! Hiss! Quack! Quack!
The geese are trooping to Warsaw!
For every winter, I've been told,
A Goose Fair in that town they hold,
And be they young or be they old,
Sweet maiden geese, or ganders bold,
They all must fare to Warsaw.

Hiss! Hiss! Quack! Quack!
The geese are trooping to Warsaw!
A million geese, or so they say,
In noisy flocks are on the way.
There'll be the very deuce to pay

If such an army goes astray,
Of geese that tramp to Warsaw.

Hiss! Hiss! Quack! Quack!
The geese are trooping to Warsaw!
The goose-herds drive them, all a-row,
And very well indeed they know
That geese can never barefoot go,
O'er frozen ground and eke on snow,
The many miles to Warsaw.

Hiss! Hiss! Quack! Quack!
The geese are trooping to Warsaw!
But ere they leave their master's land,
They walk through tar and then through sand,
And so on well-shod feet they stand,
As, in a feathered army grand,
The geese march on to Warsaw.

Hiss! Hiss! Quack! Quack!
With arching neck and curving back,
The booted geese go cackling down
To meet their fate in Warsaw town.
Hiss! Hiss!

THE GEESE ARE TROOPING TO WARSAW

THE FAIRY RING[1]

THRONED on a grassy knoll, I watch
The elfin host come trooping by,
And hear the whir of fairy wings,
The goblin voices, shrill and high.
Behind them glides a magic train
Of Kings and Princes, armor-clad,
And serving as their squires bold
Boots, Ashiepattle, Cinderlad.
With silken rustle, flash of gem,
Queen and Czaritsa sweep along,
While red-capped Troll and rainbow Sprite
Peep out amid the enchanted throng.

Ting-ling, ting-ling, how sweet the ring,
Like golden bells, of fairy laughter;
Rap-tap, rap-tap, how sharp the clap
Of fairy footfalls following after!

Where witch-grass grows and fern-seed lies,
A fairy ring is dimly seen;

[1] From *The Fairy Ring*. By permission of Messrs. Doubleday, Page & Co.

And there a glitt'ring host is met
To dance upon the moonlit green.
Riquet, the Tufted, lightly turns
The Fair One with the Golden Hair;
And Prince Desire and Mignonette
Form yet another graceful pair.
Tall as a tower stands Galifron;
The Desert Fay, with snakes bedight,
First pirouettes with him and then
With wee Tom Thumb, King Arthur's Knight.

Ting-ling, ting-ling, how sweet the ring,
Like golden bells, of fairy laughter;
Rap-tap, rap-tap, how sharp the clap
Of fairy footfalls following after!

Sweet, unseen harpers harp and sing,
Faint elfin horns the air repeat;
Rapunzel shakes her shining braids,
The White Cat trips with velvet feet.
Rose-red, Snow-white, the faithful Bear,
Cross hands with gallant Percinet;
While Tattercoats, in turn, salutes
Yvon, the Fearless, and Finette.

— But hark! the cock begins to crow;
The darkness turns to day, and where
The fairy dancers trod the green,
Now is the space but empty air.

I WONDER![1]

I WONDER if, in Samarcand,
Grave camels kneel in golden sand,
Still lading bales of magic spells,
And charms a lover's wisdom tells,
To fare across the desert main
And bring the Princess home again —
I wonder!

I wonder in Japan to-day
If grateful beasts find out the way
To those who succored them in pain,
And bring their blessings back again;
If cranes and sparrows take the shape,
And all the ways of mortals ape —
I wonder!

In Bagdad may there still be found
That blackish powder, finely ground,
Which changes all who on it feast,
Monarch or slave, to bird or beast?

[1] From *Tales of Wonder*. By permission of Messrs. Doubleday, Page & Co.

I WONDER!

Do Caliphs taste and, unafraid,
Turn storks and weeping night-owls aid?
I wonder!

I wonder if in far Cathay
The nightingale still trills her lay
Beside the Porcelain Palace door,
And courtiers praise her as before?
If emperors dream of bygone things,
And, musing, weep the while she sings?
I wonder!

Such things have never chanced to me.
I wonder if, to eyes that see,
These magic visions still appear
In daily living, now and here?
If every flower is touched with glory?
If e'en the grass-blades tell a story?
I wonder!

EVERYBODY'S BABY

Pray, where does the bonniest baby dwell,
The sweetest that ever did grow?
Say, where shall I find it, now truthfully tell,
Please show me the way I must go.

The bonniest baby that ever did grow,
Without a "perhaps," or a "maybe,"
It is hers, it is mine, it is his, it is thine;
Oh, it 's everybody's baby!

But choices in babies there surely must be,
Though all may be charming and pretty;
The fairest, the rarest, the dearest of all,
Must needs be the theme of my ditty.

The very same story I can but repeat,
Without a "perhaps," or a "maybe,"
It is hers, it is mine, it is his, it is thine;
Oh, it 's everybody's baby!

There is n't a baby on earth, you maintain,
That is n't a duck and a treasure,

EVERYBODY'S BABY

A beauty, a jewel, a poppet, a pet,
The life of the house and its pleasure?

I stoutly maintain it; I state it again,
Without a "perhaps," or a "maybe,"
It is hers, it is mine, it is his, it is thine,
It is everybody's baby!

WHICH IS THE ROYAL BABY?[1]

A CRADLE of gold has the Czarevitch,
With gold-leaf drapery shrouded;
Two chairs, with a pillow, my baby's bed
In a tenement chamber crowded;
But my pretty one nestles as softly down
As the wee little lad that's born to a crown —
So, which is the royal baby?

In Caucasus linen the Czarevitch goes,
And wonderful diamonds hold it;
This treasure of mine wears a cotton gown,
And ribbons of blue enfold it;
But his eyes shine out from a kingly face,
And he wears his robe with a sov'reign grace, —
So, which is the royal baby?

Tall Cossacks keep watch o'er the Czarevitch,
And sentries are set at his portal;
My little one has but a single guard, —
He who keepeth all things mortal;

[1] Written in 1905

But nobody grudges my baby's life
Like the Russian princeling's, born to strife, —
So, which is the royal baby?

Three nurses, they say, has the Czarevitch,
With degrees from a royal college.
Alas, for my sweeting! He has but one,
And love is her only knowledge!
But the Queen of the Russias may not stay
With her prince, like me, for the livelong day, —
So, which is the royal baby?

FLOWER SONG

(Adapted from Froebel)

WHY is the flower's breath so sweet?
Ah, who can tell the reason!
Perhaps the angel-children fair,
Come in the blossom season,
And with their blessed hands they touch
Each bud so small,
Each posy tall; —
To think so were no treason.

No baby eye, however bright,
May see their garments flowing,
Among the blooms they softly pass,
Rich odors round them strowing,
Ah, honey-sweet the flower they touched!
Sweet as the breeze
That rocks the trees
When apple-buds are blowing.

SWEET SLEEP [1]

Sweet sleep, fleet sleep,
Come to Baby here!
With thy calm hand,
With thy cool hand,
Touch these eyelids dear.

Dream-land, gleam-land,
Ope thy golden doors.
Let these wee feet,
Let these soft feet,
Tread thy rainbow floors.

White wings, bright wings,
Baby, guard thy bed.
Angels watch thee,
Angels ward thee,
Blessings 'round thee shed.

[1] Music: Beethoven's "Sonata Pathétique." Opus 13.

THE MAKING OF THE FLAG

Fivescore and forty years ago,
Fivescore and forty years, —
This land was but an infant, then,
The child of blood and tears.

To-day a mighty nation,
A hundred million souls
Are nurtured by her splendid strength,
Are mustered on her rolls.

But even in that long ago,
That time of stress and strife,
When Liberty, beset by foes,
Was battling for her life,

E'en then, they waved a standard,
They made Britannia yield;
The crosses of her patron saints
Still blazoned on its field.

But for new times, new customs;
Columbia, from her throne,
With goddess-pride demanded
A banner of her own.

The Continental Congress,
O'erheard Columbia's call
And to fulfill her mandate
Its members gathered all.

"Resolved," they vowed in conclave, —
So history relates.
"A proud new Flag befits the pride
Of these United States.

"Its stripes of white and crimson
Shall thirteen states unite;
The Union be denoted
By thirteen stars of white."

They sought no novel colors;
What colors should there be
Save white for Faith and blue for Hope
And red for Liberty?

And when they'd planned the banner,
The Fathers straight went down
With Washington to Betsy Ross,
Of Philadelphy town.

Her needlework was noted
  Wherever art was prized;
The Flags she wrought were famous,
  Her skill was recognized.

So Betsy, blooming Betsy,
  A patriot's widow, she,
Was first to cut and fashion
  The Flag of Liberty.

Oh, Betsy, blessed Betsy,
  What name or fame can be
So sweet as yours who 'broidered
  The Banner of the Free?

The Flag your art created,
  Where'er it be unfurled,
Proclaims the Rights of Freemen,
  The Safety of the World.

THE ANSWER OF THE FLAG

CHILD *speaks:*

FLAG of our Country,
Our red, white, and blue,
Say, whence are thy colors —
Each wonderful hue?

FLAG *speaks:*

Deep in the sunset sky,
When light was dying,
Streamed crimson banners, like
Wild armies flying.
Where, 'twixt two bands of gray,
One bar lay flaming,
Leaned I and plucked it out,
Mine for the claiming.

CHILD *speaks:*

Flag of our Country,
Right well hast thou done!
Thy red glows like rubies,
Like heart of the sun.

THE ANSWER OF THE FLAG

FLAG *speaks:*

When Summer lays her hand,
  Softly caressing,
Over the rounded earth,
  Leaving her blessing,
White sail the clouds above,
  Clear as the morning;
From these I chose me one
  For mine adorning.

CHILD *speaks:*

Flag of our Country,
  Thy heav'n-pure white,
Like crystal in sunshine,
  It dazzles the sight!

FLAG *speaks:*

Yet there remains my blue,
  Jewel-besprinkled,
Like to some dusky pool,
  Where the stars twinkled.
Night doffed her misty veil
  When all were sleeping,

Unclasped her starry crown,
Gave to my keeping.

CHILD *speaks:*

Flag of our Country,
Thy blue is more rare
Than turquoise or gentian;
'T is measureless air!

FLAG *speaks:*

Child, may my brilliant hues,
Chosen from heaven,
Serve as thy benison,
Prove as thy leaven;
Flaming may be thy heart,
Loving and giving,
Clear as the stars thy will,
Snow-white thy living!

PROTECT THE FLAG

We hail with delight a tattered flag
That's darkened with battle-stains.
But never one that's a battered flag,
The victim of storms and rains.

We may wave a banner, service-torn,
That led in a gallant fray,
But flaunt no ensign that's weather-worn,
No bunting that's had its day.

The flag that has served is a sacred flag,
No matter how worn it be;
The one that's neglected is nobody's flag,
That nobody cares to see.

Protect "Old Glory," nor let it rack,
Like a storm-rent sail at sea;
No slight must sully, no insult stain
The star-sown flag of the Free.

A COLLAR OF HONOR

In France, sunny France, far away o'er the sea,
There are things that they do rather better than we;
Perhaps these are many, perhaps but a few —
Be that as it may, there's one thing that they do:
They recognize merit where'er it is found
And ever its praises are willing to sound;
And even a dog, if he act well his part,
Is held in esteem in the popular heart.
You feel it, you know it, you see that it's so,
When you meet in the street, as you stroll to and fro,
The dogs with their collars of honor.

A dog who has rescued in perilous strife
A poor human creature, and saved him his life,
Is counted thereafter a ward of the state,
The charge of officials, from petty to great.
His bed and his board are forever assured;
In health he is tended, in illness he's cured.
A band of bright metal he wears round his throat,
And pride of it shows in each hair of his coat.

A COLLAR OF HONOR

You feel it, you know it, you see that it's so,
When you meet in the street, as you stroll to and fro,
The dogs with their collars of honor.

At Brest, should you go there, as I did one night, —
'T is a post of the navy and well worth a sight, —
A Newfoundland dog you may happen to meet,
A hero whose praises the sailors repeat.
So many he's rescued from tempest and wreck
That a grand decoration he wears at his neck.
It hangs from his collar, and when it is seen
He is gravely saluted by each bold marine.
E'en sentries do homage when trots up and down,
Bejeweled, beribboned, this pride of the town,
This dog with his collar of honor.

HE IS GRAVELY SALUTED BY EACH BOLD MARINE

THE CHILDREN'S SHIP

(*Presented to the Picture-Book Fund for French Children*)

WHAT ship is this comes speeding on?
They say she's bound for France.
Why, sir, she's called the "Children's Ship"
And every wave's a-dance
To push her swift across the sea,
For over there, they say,
There's hosts of homeless little folk,
Who weep instead of play.

And what's her freight, my little man,
What cargo does she bear?
Is't food to eat, or milk to drink,
Or clothes for babes to wear?
Why, sir, our ship has none of these!
French children all are sad;
We're sending heaps of laughing-stock
And stuff to make them glad.

Our ship is crammed with savings-banks,
From turret down to hold,

And some are full of silver coins
And some are full of gold,
This splendid treasure we've amassed
And all is freely sent
To buy those children picture-books,
And bring them back content.

They say the French, poor little things,
Can't read an English word,
But picture-books are in a tongue
That every one has heard.
We've saved our pennies, day by day,
Nor given toys a glance
And now the money'll change to smiles
For little folk in France.

SOLDIER OR SLACKER

It is n't because he carries a gun
And sleeps in a tent when the day is done,
  That a man is called a soldier;
Nor because he marches, with head held high
And a swift salute when the flag goes by,
  For none of these make a soldier.

'T is because he heeds when an order's heard,
Because he obeys it with never a word,
  That a man is called a soldier;
Because his weapons are shining bright,
His courage steady from morn till night, —
  For these are the signs of a soldier.

'T is slackers who argue and fail to obey,
'T is slackers who pout when they can't have their
    way,
  They're not for the life of a soldier.
'T is slackers who idle and won't do their bit,
They never could fight, for they have n't the grit,
  Oh, valor it takes for a soldier!

Garrett-[illegible] Library,
EVANSTON, [illegible]

LEARNING TO KNIT

I WANT so much to learn to knit
That Grandma said if I would sit
Quite patiently, nor fret, nor pout,
Should all my work be raveled out,
She'd try to teach me, for I ought
To learn while still a child, she thought.

"You hold the needles so," she said,
"And round your finger wind your thread.
Take up a stitch and knit it plain,
And then another one again;
Be sure and do not knit too tight,
Keep all the stitches well in sight."

"Don't split a stitch, don't twist the wool;
Slip off the loop and never pull;
Don't drop a stitch, do what you will,
For such a gap no art can fill.
See that the work looks smooth and plain;
If rough, then all your toil's in vain!"

The while she talked, her fingers flew
As swift as birds across the blue;
Her needles twinkled like the rain
That dashes down the window-pane;
Her ball went round at such a pace
You held your breath to see it race.

I wonder if in Grandma's day
Their grandmas taught in such a way!
A modern child's too slow, by far,
To learn from such a shooting-star;
As well a rabbit might, for fun,
Instruct a tortoise how to run!

THE TIMID OYSTER

Look upon the timid oyster,
Ever growing moist and moister,
As he hides within his cloister
By the sea.
To all common human seeing,
We can hardly help agreeing,
Never yet was calmer being
Than is he!

Yet with nerves he has his troubles,
And when thunder boils and bubbles,
Then his nervousness redoubles,
So they say.
He has nowhere to betake him,
When the thunder-terrors shake him,
No asylum can he make him,
Far away.

Timid, shrinking little oyster,
Do you never yearn to royster,
In your damp and dusky cloister,
'Mid the storm?

THE TIMID OYSTER

As we tenderly inspect you,
How we hanker to protect you,
From all storm-winds to deflect you,
Keep you warm.

Come to us when noise annoys you,
When sweet hope no longer buoys you,
When the thunder-peal destroys you,
Come at will.
Condiments we'll have to meet you,
Ice and lemon bring to greet you,
But though grandly thus we'll treat you,
We'll be still!

DINNER-TIME

My mother says with changing days
Come just as many changing ways;
There's change in dresses, change in hats
And eke in balls and cricket-bats.
Even in words the fashions vary;
What once was fine, grows ordinary.
Such questions trouble not my head,
But there's one thing I really dread!
If dinner-time gets so belated
That every child on earth is fated
To go to bed before it's ready,
How can he keep his courage steady?
In Froissart's time, Kings dined at ten,
The morning ten, of course, and when
Their subjects called on them at five,
They found them only half alive,
With nightcaps on, and yawning so
That courtiers quick prepared to go.
Louis Quatorze, the Monarch Grand,
Had matters vastly better planned.
At twelve o'clock he dined and wined;

As good a time as one could find!
Charles Second dined at one, an hour
That lasted long as did his power,
For when he ceased to dine at all
At two they ate in palace-hall.
At four o'clock, in Cowper's days,
The meal was served, the poet says,
A wretched time, mistake complete;
A time to play and not to eat!
When Waterloo had come and gone,
When gentle Peace ruled Albion,
And "Boney" ceased to play his tricks,
The dinner-hour was changed to six.
With glory fed, the nation well
Might thus retard the dinner-bell.
Dinner at six for long held sway,
But seven's an hour approved to-day,
And mother asks her friends at eight.
I hear the doom pronounced by Fate —
Soon will they dine at midnight deep,
When every child is wrapped in sleep.

THE WANDERING EELS[1]

The times are out of joint, my dears,
The world no longer wags
As once it did when we were young;
Domestic virtue lags.
The lads are always in the street,
The lasses far from home,
And though you'd scarce believe it, dears,
E'en eels begin to roam!

Time was when every eel, my dears,
Went early to his bed,
And such a thing as midnight swim
Ne'er entered in his head.
But now by day he simply squirms
Where shallow waters be,

[1] In order to prevent eels from leaving the coasts of Denmark, the government is laying a cable between the mainland and an adjacent island, which is to be strung with electric lamps. This luminous barrier is to keep the eels, who travel only at night, from emigrating to deep water.

While when the curfew tolls, my dears,
He wriggles out to sea!

In Denmark they're so bad, my dears,
These vicious, vagrant eels,
That government has laid a plot
Which deepest art conceals,
To make them think that day is night,
Or rather, night is day,
For only in the dark, my dears,
Will they set on their way.

From Denmark to its aisles, my dears,
And from its headlands steep,
They've laid a cable strung with lamps,
Illumining the deep.
The sportive eels at night come out
To run away to sea,
And finding that it's light, my dears,
Slip back again for tea!

A moral there is hid, my dears,
Within this watery tale,
And just as brightly does it shine
As any fishes' scale.

Whene'er you leave your house at night,
With frolics in your head,
And find the streets alight, my dears,
Just toddle home to bed!

EASTER BLOSSOMS

Far away, down in the dark of the earth
While the cold March winds are blowing,
The grasses are making their way to birth,
And the Easter flowers are growing.

So deep in the heart of each little child,
No matter what may be the weather,
Kind thoughts may be growing, and virtues mild,
Be twining and blooming together.

THE LIFE-PRESERVERS

It happened on Ascension Day;
She came along the flowery way,
A tiny cricket bearing.
He lodged within a cage of wood,
Though prisoned, yet in heartsome mood,
For strong his chirp and daring.

'T was Florence in a radiant spring,
Ah, could my verses to you bring
A glimpse of half its wonder!
Could make you taste the honeyed air,
And breathe the flowers everywhere,
The green grass waving under.

The cricket shone as black as jet;
No less the locks that waving met
The little maiden's shoulder.
Her voice, at first, was scarcely heard —
A cricket's voice, from nesting stirred —
But soon, like his, grow bolder.

"Ne'er have I seen a cricket caged,"
I said, "nor as a pet engaged,
Although a household blessing!"

"Good sir," she lisped, "Ascension morn
Must every child in Florence born,
A cricket be possessing.

"And early, early do we look
In every park and grassy nook,
Where crickets breed and nourish;
And when they're caught and prisoned here,
We'll live and thrive another year,
If through the day they flourish!"

"My little maid, it cannot be
A cricket holds your life in fee
And all on him you're chancing!"
"Old man," she cried, "there's not a doubt,
All Florentines have found it out!"
And down the road went dancing.

I shook my head. The world is rife
With toil and care; a bubble's life,
And death will come to prick it;
But of all fragile things that be
Most frail is that, it seems to me,
Which hangs upon a cricket!

TALKING THROUGH THE HAT

OR

THE MANNERS OF KOREA

THE not uncommon saying, "You are talking through your hat!"
Must have come from old Korea, where they're quite adept in that.
All the head-gear 's telescopic in the ancient Hermit-land,
And may be shot up at pleasure when you meet a noble grand.
For a commoner it's lowered; even then 't is not so small,
For it's three feet in diameter and seven inches tall.

Say you're walking of a morning in an old Korean street,
And a grandly hatted gentleman you happen for to meet;
Should his covering be yellow, with a kind of toad-stool brim,
You may know he is in mourning, and may straight condole with him.

"IT 'S THREE FEET IN DIAMETER AND SEVEN INCHES TALL."
"SUCH ADORNMENT MEANS PROSPERITY AND GREAT SUCCESS IN LIFE."
"YOU MAY KNOW HE IS IN MOURNING AND STRAIGHT CONDOLE WITH HIM."
FOR TO SERVE THEM AS UMBRELLAS, SHOULD A SUDDEN STORM DESCEND."
"FOR WITH RIBBONED PIGTAIL HANGING, YOU GO HATLESS ALL YOUR DAYS."
"HATS MAY ALSO SERVE AS BILL-BOARDS."

TALKING THROUGH THE HAT

His may be a recent sorrow, or persistence of an old;
But in tones of buff and amber his bereavement will be told.

Turn a corner and, advancing, you may see a smiling face,
Topped by hat bedecked with jewels or set off with beaded lace.
If the trimming's long and ample and is tied beneath the chin,
You may ask a loan of money and the favor hope to win.
Such adornment means prosperity and great success in life;
Or the stranger may be happy and have chosen well his wife.

Should the morning be uncertain and the wind a wavering one,
With a mass of gathering shadows and capricious gleams of sun,
From the hats of certain persons skirts of paper may depend,

For to serve them as umbrellas, should a sudden storm descend.
The Korean Weather Bureau thus is organized, you see,
And may be by all consulted, safe from any form of fee.

If you're bidden to a party in the Land of Morning Calm,
You may proudly bear the missive in your hat of braided palm.
Thus your status in society is settled once for all,
And you're sure to be invited if Dame Grundy gives a ball.
Hats may also serve as bill-boards, and upon them you may post
Such a bit of news or gossip as may interest you most.

In Korea, then, the head-gear's the essential thing in life;
But a man may not assume one till he's sought him out a wife.
Hats accompany betrothal, as with marriage goes a ring,

And the safely plighted lover hymns of joy may fitly
sing.
Scorn a woman in Korea, and the sex your scorn
repays,
For with ribboned pigtail hanging, you go hatless
all your days.

THE DAY OF THE DOG

In a sheltered spot of a sunny street,
I saw on a wintry morn,
A meeting of dogs of every degree,
Both nobly and humbly born.
A paper thrown on the sidewalk down
Engaged them all to stay,
And they listened the while a mastiff read, —
"The dogs are having their day!"

"The place of the dog," so the paper said,
"Has been a precarious one,
Dependent on birth, upon personal charm,
And not upon duty done;
But now that a dog is judged by his work,
These things have vanished away.
The mongrel pup is as good as the rest, —
The dogs are having their day!"

"And what is this work?" asked a tiny Skye;
"Is it anything strange or new?
We always have served with all of our hearts,
We always have been true blue."

"'T is soldier work," a Newfoundland cried,
"So all of the papers say;
Just hear what the mastiff is going to read, —
The dogs are having their day!"

"A shepherd dog," the chronicle says,
"Two miles and a half ran he,
In minutes ten, through a storm of shell,
For help for his Company.
A nameless dog, of no descent,
Rushed into the thick of the fray,
And dragged a wounded soldier back, —
The dogs are having their day!"

"They went as searchers through No Man's Land,
They guarded the loaded wains;
Courageous, loyal, they kept their watch
O'er the wounded in railway trains;
They served as sentinels, none could pass
Where they crouched and sleepless lay;
They carried messages far and fast, —
The dogs are having their day!"

I listened a while as the mastiff read,
For he paid little heed to me,

And his audience greeted with barks of joy,
Each proof of efficiency;
The dog-star is riding high, I thought,
And though it was long on the way,
The faithful at last are receiving their meed, —
The dogs are having their day!

MEADOW TALK

"Don't pick all the flowers!" cried Daisy one day
To a rosy-cheeked boy who was passing her way;
"If you take every one, you will very soon see
That when next summer comes, not a bud will there be!"

"Quite true!" said the Clover,
"And over and over
I've sung that same song,
To whoe'er came along."

Quoth the Buttercup, "I
Have not been at all shy
In impressing that rule
On each child of the school."

"I've touched the same subject,"
Said Timothy Grass.
"'Leave just a few flowers!'
I beg, as they pass."

Sighed a shy little Fern,
From her home in the shade,
"About pulling up roots,
What a protest I've made!"

"The children are heedless!"
The Gentian declared,
"When my blossom-time comes,
Not a bud will be spared."

"Take courage, sweet neighbor!"
The Violet said;
And raised in entreaty
Her delicate head;

"The children are thoughtless,
I own, in my turn;
But if we *all* teach them,
They cannot but learn."

"The lesson," said the Alders,
"Is a simple one, indeed,
Where no root is, blooms no flower,
Where no flower is, no seed."

"'T is very well said!" chirped the Robin,
From the elm tree fluttering down;
"If you'll write on your leaves such a lesson,
I'll distribute them over the town."

"Oh, write it, dear Alders!" the Innocents cried,
Their pretty eyes tearfully blue,
"You are older than we are; you're strong and
you're wise —
There's none but would listen to you!"

But, ah! the Alders could not write;
And though the Robin knew
The art as well as any bird —
Or so he said — he flew
Straight up the hill and far away,
Remarking as he went,
He had a business errand
And was not on pleasure bent.

Did the children learn the lesson,
Though 't was never written down?
We shall know when, gay and blithesome,
Lady Summer comes to town.

KNOCKING ON WOOD

Tap on the trees and the leaves will tell
Whether the fairies wish thee well.

A PRIMITIVE father once lived in a wood,
With a primitive daughter of primitive mood,
And a primitive wife who attended the pair
And served them the choicest of primitive fare.
The primitive daughter was fearful and shy
And afraid of her life if a hare rustled by;
The primitive wife had no valor at all
And shivered and shook if a nut chanced to fall.

The father was often away at the chase,
Or running with danger an obstacle race,
And dreaded a loss in his primitive home,
If e'er in his absence a peril should come.
He dreaded, she dreaded, they dreaded all three,
The sprites of the air and the sprites of the sea,
The little gray gnomes that live down in the ground
And the gossamer elves that in flowers abound.

It was only the fairies that lived in the trees,
Whose spells could protect them from evils like these;

And so, as they wended their primitive ways,
And threaded the wood in its devious maze,
They'd knock on a tree and would timidly say
To the Spirit who might be within there that day:
"Fairy fair, Fairy fair, wish thou me well;
'Gainst evil witcheries weave me a spell!"

Then keen would they listen with primitive ear,
Their hearing made finer and sharper by fear;
And soon would the leaves make a whisper'd reply:
"Fear ye not, mortals, no harm shall come nigh!"
Thus primitive mother and primitive child
Protected themselves in the primitive wild,
And e'en to this day is the practice made good
When, to ward off disaster, we knock upon wood.

THE ROBIN AND THE ANGLEWORM

A PLUMP and saucy Robin
Was gayly hopping round,
And heard a ringèd Angleworm
A-squirming underground.
"Oh, do my ears deceive me,
Or can it really be,
A tender, juicy luncheon
Is waiting there for me?"
Thus spake the hungry Robin,
And cocked a listening ear,
An ear to hear the grass grow,
The falling dust to hear.
He tapped among the grasses
With yellow beak so gay,
"Good-morrow, neighbor Angleworm!
How's all with you to-day?"
"I'm well, kind neighbor Robin;
The earth is sweetly damp;
You're stepping just above me,
I feel your noisy tramp."

"Climb up, then, slippery brother!
The rain is falling fast;
Come up and take a bite with me
Until the storm be past."
The earthworm hurried upward;
Said Robin, with a grin,
"Well, now, you've troubled to come out,
I'll thank you to come IN!"

THE JOLLY DUGONG

It was the jolly Dugong,
As he sat on the springing lea,
And his eyes were blue as the raven's wing,
And his hair was black as the sea.

He piped and he trilled on his baritone tail,
Till the fishes began to stare;
And came, with a skip o'er the shimmering sand,
To beg for their favorite air.

Then he scratched his head with his clammy claw,
And he smoothed his face with his fin,
While he murmured, "Come hither, my aqueous friends,
And a ditty I'll soon begin."

So the fishes approached with a festive flop,
In numbers even and odd;
And the halibut leaned on the pickerel's arm,
While the trout escorted the cod.

As the scaly bevy gathered around,
The Dugong unbuckled his belt,
And he tuned his tail with a tuning fork,
Carved out of the rib of a smelt.

"Ah," he sighed, "it is really a joy to receive
A mark of approval so rare,
For I very well know that a fish's applause,
Is to flourish his skin in the air."

Then he warbled in notes that were merry and gay,
And in tones that were clear as a flute,
And he caroled a lay of the rolling deep,
While the fishes with joy were mute.

The song was the one that they loved the best,
And 't was quite a remarkable sight,
When they waved their skins in the evening air,
And rattled their bones with delight.

"O, Rosy, my posy!" the sun-fish said,
To a herring that swam by his side,
"On similar music, we'll constantly feed,
If you'll be but my beauteous bride."

"O, halibut, walibut!" whispered the cod,
"What a glorious song of the sea!
Throw your scaly skin on the sandy shore,
And dance on the wave with me."

The hours slipped by, and the music went on,
While the mists of the evening arose —
But everything earthly must come to a stop,
And e'en such a concert must close.

The Dugong stopped singing — the hour was late,
All hurried for skins to the shore;
'T was confusion and bustle — each snatched what
he could,
Half put them on hind-side before.

Old Flatty, the flounder, went off in a coat
That was certainly made for the eel,
While Pinky, the salmon's, was wretched in fit,
And extremely unpleasant in feel.

So, highly uncomfortable, each swam away,
With a coat much too small, or too great;
And just such an accident may befall you,
If you stay at a party too late.

THE DANDIFIED MANATEE

Oh, the Manatee, the Manatee, —
What does he do when the winds blow free?
He seeks some spot where the water 's low,
And curls his hair while the breezes blow;
And never a thought has he in his head,
Except that he knows when to go to his bed —
The Manatee, the Manatee.

Oh, the Manatee, the Manatee, —
What does he do when the tide runs free?
With a coral shoe-brush under his thumb,
He glazes his fins with aluminum.
What matter to him the ocean's flow.
He's not in a mercantile line you know —
The Manatee, the Manatee.

Oh, the Manatee, the Manatee,
What does he do when the birds fly free?
As they rise and dip and lazily flop,
He watches intently, in hopes they may drop

A band of feathers to circle his throat,
Or some down for the edge of his redingote —
The Manatee, the Manatee.

Oh, the Manatee, the Manatee,
What does he do when the ships sail free?
Oh, far away where the wave's at rest,
He searches for pearls to jewel his breast.
There's nothing new in the rig of a ship,
And for sailor fashions he cares not a flip.
The Manatee, the Manatee.

Oh, the Manatee, the Manatee,
A very Beau Brummell of dandies he!
His fins are polished, his hair is curled,
His dainty umbrella is properly furled!
There's never a porpoise he meets on the sea
But plaintively murmurs, "I would I could be
The bride of that exquisite Manatee!"

YOUNG SUNDAY HAT

YOUNG Sunday hat,
On a shelf she sat,
All gay with ribbons and flowers.
'T was Saturday night,
And the morning light
Would shine in a few short hours.

"Alas!" she said,
"Far better dead
Than mewed up here forever.
No joy I know
Imprisoned so,
And people see me never!

"Why could n't I stay
In the shop so gay,
Where all was so bright and shining;
Where all might admire,
With eager desire,
My ribbons and flowers twining?"

As thus she sighed,
The door swung wide,
A wee maid entered singing.
With hat and fan,
Away she ran,
While Sunday bells were ringing.

The ride was long,
The wind was strong,
They passed above a river,
Whose waters deep,
Whose banks so steep,
Set Sunday hat a-shiver.

How shall I tell
What straight befell?
The frolic breezes caught her;
In spite of fears,
Of cries and tears,
They tossed her in the water.

She filled and sank
Close to the bank,
The mud her sorrows crowning.

"Drive on!" she cried,
"I can't be dried,
Far better leave me drowning."

Now low she lies,
Where bull-frogs wise
Around her crown are sitting.
While cool and slim
About her brim
The silver fish are flitting.

THE LOLLIPOP BUSH

In a garden, afar in a tropical clime,
Where the air is astir with the lily-bell's chime,
And honey-sweet breezes from Araby blow,
There stands the green bush where the lollipops grow.
Oh, sugary lollipops,
Nectarous lollipops,
Best of all sweeties that ever did grow.

There, torrents of soda that sparkle and gleam,
Dash foaming o'er boulders of rosy ice-cream;
But neither pink ices, nor soda's cold flow
Compare with that bush where the lollipops grow.
Oh, sugary lollipops,
Nectarous lollipops,
Best of all sweeties that ever did grow.

On lakes of clear syrup, the waffle-boats ply,
Past islands of cookies and mountains of pie,

But the wise, while the voyagers sail to and fro,
Remain by the bush where the lollipops grow.
Oh, sugary lollipops,
Nectarous lollipops,
Best of all sweeties that ever did grow.

The walls of this garden are builded of buns,
All powdered with sugar and stuck full of plums,
But sweeter than these, with its fruit hanging low,
Is that wonderful bush where the lollipops grow,
Oh, sugary lollipops,
Nectarous lollipops,
Best of all sweeties that ever did grow.

DIFFERENCE IN TASTES

THERE are plenty of things that love the rain
And relish a thorough wetting,
They laugh and sing in a driving storm,
For their hearts' delight they're getting.
"More wet! more wet!" croaks the frog in the pond;
"More water! more water!" the flowers;
"You never can fall too long for me!"
Cries the thirsty dust to the showers;

The puddle dimples at every drop;
The yellow-billed ducks go swimming;
The leaves of the trees are clapping their hands;
With laughter the brook is brimming;
The grasses welcome the pit-a-pat,
For beauty and strength they're gaining;
But Water-cart mopes by himself at home,
For he can't go out when it's raining!

THE WORD OF A GENTLEMAN

(*An Anecdote of Sir William Francis Patrick Napier: 1785–1860*)

Twilight was falling in the English village,
The green deserted and the loiterers sped,
When down the quiet road there rang a footstep,
Martial, heroic, as in battle bred.

Musing on glories past, the gallant soldier
Savored the freshness of the evening air,
When to his ears there came a childish grieving,
A burst of sobs, a tempest of despair.

Close to the stream that rippled by the goose-green,
Down in the grass there lay a flaxen head, —
And just beside the curls a broken pitcher
Proclaimed the reason of the tear-drops shed.

The general bowed his splendid height, and, softly,
"What is it, child?" he asked the little maid.
Two wet blue eyes looked up at him, in answer:
"My pitcher! Will you mend it, sir?" she said.

The soldier smiled. "I fear 't is past the mending;
But grieve no more, 't was not of porcelain rare.
Take heart. Here's sixpence bright to buy another."
He searched his pockets. Not a coin was there!

With parted lips the child stood, all expectant,
The general, laughing, owned his shabby plight.
"But have no fear, my sweet," he cried. "I'll meet thee,
At this same place and hour, to-morrow night."

The little maid looked in his face and trusted;
Smiling her thanks she slipped away alone.
The soldier's homeward march was sweetly lighted
By the pure, simple faith that she had shown.

His lodging reached, an invitation waited,
Flattering, courtly, for the morrow's night;
The very selfsame hour at which he'd trysted
The village child beside the streamlet bright.

"You'll go, Sir William?" asked the anxious servant.
"Nobles alone are bid, and soldiers of the Queen!"

"MY PITCHER! WILL YOU MEND IT, SIR?"

THE WORD OF A GENTLEMAN

"To-morrow night I'm pledged," the general answered,
"To meet a child upon the village green."

"To meet a little child?" the servant faltered,
And, half-believing, quick the answer heard:
"Monarch or child, to whomsoe'er he gives it,
A gentleman and soldier keeps his word!"

NO MAN'S LAND

In No Man's Land, five hundred and three, —
Of course you'll suppose that the date's B.C.
They published a law through the country round,
A law which made great trouble, they found,
That in all the schools all over the land,
They must keep order. You understand
How hard it was for the children!

If a boy reached school a second late
He stood all day at the entrance gate.
If a girl wrote notes in the study-hour,
She was prisoned high in the old church tower.
There was wailing and weeping from morn till night,
They always did wrong, they could n't do right.
Oh, hard indeed for the children!

Playing tunes on the points of pens,
Grunting and growling like beasts in dens,
Whoever did this would regret it forever
For his head would be bagged in a manner most clever.
If they missed a word from a lesson set
Not a scrap of food did the poor things get.
Oh, this was hard for the children!

NO MAN'S LAND

A girl was in a sorrowful state
If she pictured her neighbors on the slate,
A book full of problems in Long Division
They made her work out with perfect precision.
If a boy was riotous on the stairs
He spent his recess in a pit full of bears,
Oh, hard it was for the children.

Laughter and whispering; school-desks scarred
All had penalties just as hard.
Youthful opinions of teachers in verse,
The sentence for these was rather worse.
In short, as you'll readily comprehend,
Their mischievous wills must break or bend.
Oh, was n't it hard for the children!

If you had but lived in No Man's Land
Your manners would soon have been taken in hand.
But though you're saved from the dolorous fate
Of being punished early and late,
It's just as well to follow the plan
Of being always as good as you can.
Though that's rather hard for children.

KAMATU SAN AND 'LIZABETH ANN

O Kamatu San,
Afar in Japan,
Oh, a brown little girl is she;
But 'Lizabeth Ann
In west Michigan,
Is as fair as a child can be.

O Kamatu goes
As gay as a rose,
In satin and silk all day;
Her slippers disclose
Poor 'Lizabeth's toes
And cotton's her modest array.

In Kamatu's land
A festival grand,
Is held for the dolls in March,
And dances are planned
Where the cherry trees stand,
Or under the cedar and larch.

In 'Lizabeth's state,
Though wealthy and great,
No dollie has any such joys.
Ah! 't is a hard fate
To live at this date,
In a country so careless of toys!

Yet 'Lizabeth Ann
And Kamatu San,
In loving their dollies agree;
So dolls in Japan,
Or in west Michigan
Can be happy with either, you see.

THE LITTLE 'PRENTICE LAD

(A German Legend)

Long ago, in an old-world town,
'Mid old-world houses, dusk and brown,
With red-tiled roofs pulled over their eyes,
Half-hiding the shine of the blessed skies,
In a clockmaker's shop in a crooked street,
Lived a 'prentice lad. There was naught so sweet
In the width of the world as the orphan child,
Flow'r of the Fatherland, Hermann styled.

Blue shone his eyes through his locks of lint;
White were his cheeks. There was more than a hint
From the gossips who met in the public square,
That Hermann would scarce be so saintly fair
If the clockmaker's wife would be more free
With her porridge and milk. It was plain to see
He was not half-nourished. Such things were shame
To a rich old town and a shop of name!

Times there were in that shop of name
When each separate clock in its shining frame

To Hermann's hearing, the whole of the day,
"So hungry!" "So hungry!" seemed ever to say.
And hours there were in the winter's chill,
In the dead of the night, when the town was still,
When their bells with resonant clamor tolled,
"Cold! A-cold! Little Hermann is cold!"

Yet the innocent lad asked never for more
Of the rosy good-wife, with her ample store,
Contented to toil at the clockmaker's will,
With errand and parcel, to shop and to mill,
If only but once through the crowded day
To the church they would let him to kneel and pray,
To gaze at the sculptured Mother there,
And the dear Babe Jesus, so marble-fair.

The clock-maker jeered at him. Hermann, the Saint,
He scornfully called him and strangely quaint
And as strangely fitting, the gossips said,
Was the name for the lad of the lint-white head,
"Saint, if I might be!" so Hermann thought,
'Mid the whisp'ring clocks as he gently wrought,
"Would I had treasure to serve my King,
But only its love has my heart to bring!"

THE LITTLE 'PRENTICE LAD

Christmas Eve in the old-world town,
Snow-white and shining came softly down.
Master and mistress, all gayly bedight,
Leaving the 'prentice to fare as he might,
Sped to the Councillor's annual feast,
Food being most to them, worship the least,
"Supperless, fireless," yet thought the lad,
"Still have I ample to make me glad.

"Now I have no one to say me nay
Straight to the church will I run and pray.
Would I had aught I could take to Him there,
On this Holy Night, to my Christ-child fair!"
Like an angel vision, so white, so sweet,
He was hast'ning on through the snowy street,
When a kindly dame at her apple-stand
Pressed a golden pippin into his hand.

Happiest soul 'neath the round moon's light,
The 'prentice lad, on that bitter night.
Here was his gift for the Blessed Child,
A fitting gift, and he softly smiled.
Kneeling down where the candles' glow
Flushed rosy the marble, he whispered low,

"Loveliest Christ-child, take from me,
The only treasure I have for Thee!"

Wonder of wonders! The sculptured hand
Slowly unfolded at his command;
Caught was the fruit in a swift embrace,
While a smile shone out on the marble face.
Raptured, adoring, the boy knelt on,
While a whisper stole from the lips of stone, —
"Little Saint Hermann, to-night with me,
Shalt apples eat from the Heav'nly Tree!"

. . . . . .

'T was dusk of dawn on the Christmas Day,
When the hoary sacristan passed that way,
And glimpsing the statue, stopped, amazed,
Half-doubting the marvel on which he gazed.
The Christ-Child, radiant seemed to stand,
The apple glowed in His marble hand,
And close to His feet, in the morning gray,
Haloed, all-glorious, Hermann lay!

THE SUNFLOWER'S STORY

A SUNFLOWER grew by a gray stone wall,
And sighed, as she nodded her head so tall,
"I would I could be
Far over the sea;
I would that I lived in Russia."

"My kindred I learn, in that fortunate clime
Grow up to a height that is something sublime;
And the seeds, which to parrots and poultry you fling,
Are there counted sweetmeats and fit for a king.
The smaller seeds straight are dispatched to the mill,
Where an oil is extracted that cooks use with skill,
While the part that remains is pressed out into cakes
And an excellent food for the cattle it makes.
All sunflower products the wise Russians keep;
Yes, even the seed-cups are fed to the sheep.
The tall hollow stalks are well dried in the sun,
Then stored up for fuel and burned every one.
From the ashes the finest potassium's made,
So they're carefully sifted and carefully weighed.
Ah, in Russia a sunflower's value is known,
And she's treated as well as a queen on her throne!

In Orient countries, it seems that when fired
And mixed with tobacco, our leaves are admired;
While our great yellow flowers are used for a dye
Which they to their garments and hangings apply.
I learned all these matters, I'd have you to know,
From some traveling merchants who, some time ago,
Conversed as they sat on a warm summer-day,
In the shade of the maple just over the way."

"Of course, I'm no longer contented at home;
No wonder I'm ardently sighing to roam.
I would I could be
Far over the sea;
I would that I lived in Russia."

A BANANA STORY

The luscious banana, as every one knows,
Is native of lands where the palm-tree grows,
And if you're required, and can't make excuse,
To mention a plant that's of very great use,
Just give the banana, and prove what you say
By quoting these lines in appropriate way:

Song of the Banana

When winds are warm first shows my leaf,
  And skies of blue are seen;
While tropic suns unroll the sheaf
  To waving flags of green.
My trunk's herbaceous, smooth, and strong,
  My honeyed flowers fair;
My yellow fruit in clusters long
  Is sweet beyond compare.
'T is still delicious, cooked or raw,
  Or when to flour 't is ground;
My leaves are used, instead of straw,
  For packing dishes round.

Look closely at their under side,
A store of wax you 'll see;
'T is made while here at home I bide,
Not gadding, like the bee.
And listen! Who would ever think,
My juices you might use
To make a kind of marking ink,
And blacking for your shoes!
But that 's not all, the tale is one
In many chapters told;
My stem must o'er its story run,
And all its wealth unfold.
Just feel its texture; hemp is made
Of just this kind of thing,
Twist it for ropes, for matting braid,
Or weave it for the king
In handkerchiefs of finest lace,
That through a ring could pass,
And pattern such as spiders trace
Upon the dewy grass.
I'm the Banana, who but I!
My aid to man I lend;
If wealth you want, for comfort sigh,
Then make of me your friend.

SONG OF THE CARNAHUBA PALM

Brazil is my country,
A palm-tree am I;
Just go with me thither,
Your wants I 'll supply.
Should you wish for a shelter,
I'll build you a gem;
The joists and the rafters
Shaped out of my stem.

My leaves, broad and pliant,
Will thatch you a roof,
And under its cover
You 'll sit weather-proof.
You need not go hungry,
I'll yield milk and flour,
The sweetest of sugar,
And vinegar sour.
Good starch I can furnish
And finest of wine.
Just cork up the bottles
With this pith of mine!

If salt you require,
Or wish to make soap,
The one I can serve you,
Quite fit for the Pope,
And alkali furnish
To make up the other;
There'll be no hard labor,
No smoke and no smother.
My leaves you'll dispose of
To make brooms and mats,
The strongest of baskets
And very best hats.

My roots distill medicine.
Should you fall ill,
'T will cure many ailments
And save a long bill.
And there is my fruit
In which cattle delight;
Its pulp is agreeable,
'T is fair to the sight;
Its rich, oily kernel
A beverage makes,

Delicious for breakfast
With feathery cakes.

My story's not ended;
My stem, light and strong,
Has uses which have not
Appeared in my song.
If a pump you would like,
If a tube you desire,
To bring in the water,
Or put out a fire;
If a flute you would fashion
To banish dull care,
There's naught in the world
With my stem can compare!

LITTLE DORRIT'S PLAYGROUND

(A new public park called "Little Dorrit's Playground" has just been opened in London, on the site of the old Marshalsea Prison, made famous by Dickens)

In a gloomy prison chamber
Far away in London town,
Once was born a little baby
As the night came darkly down.

Frowning walls and iron doorways
Hemmed her in from day to day;
In a jail-yard, barred and stony,
There alone her feet might stray.

Nothing knew she of the country,
Singing birds and waving trees;
Roofs and chimney-pots her forest,
Songsters, — creak of rusty keys.

Yet the baby, weak and fragile,
Nursed upon a prisoner's knee,
Grew a maiden, loving, helpful,
Of a spirit brave and free.

LITTLE DORRIT'S PLAYGROUND

Father, brother, wayward sister,
All upon her strength might rest,
And her own woes, light or heavy,
Close she hid within her breast.

Ragged children hung upon her,
Weak and helpless ones she fed,
She, — a child who knew no childhood, —
She herself, who lacked for bread.

Gentle, patient "Little Dorrit,"
Sweet thy name will ever be;
Sweet it breathes as scent of flowers,
Daughter of the Marshalsea!

Fallen is that gloomy prison
Where thy life-work was begun;
In its place is set a playground
Free and open, bright with sun,

Named for thee. Ah, "Little Dorrit,"
As they walk its grassy ways,
Bend and hear them, London's children, —
Hear them singing in thy praise.

THE THREAD-AND-NEEDLE TREE

I

Gladys Mehitable Arabelle Jane
Could never be taught to sew!
A table they gave her, exact to her size,
With drawers and with fittings a princess might prize.
Such needles she owned in a glittering line;
Such thread and such silk, both the coarse and the fine;
The daintiest scissors that ever were seen,
A wee golden thimble, a gem for a queen;
But, spite of these charming and housewifely things
And a pink brocade work-bag with blue satin strings,
She could not be *made* to sew!

II

Gladys Mehitable Arabelle Jane
Could never be taught to sew!
Her mother's instruction she viewed with disdain;
Her grandmother's teaching was given in vain.
Her needles she'd break and her thread she would lose,
Her thimble she'd hide in the tops of her shoes,

She'd tear a fine handkerchief given to make,
Her sampler she'd throw to the puppy to shake;
And then she would cry, and she'd fret, and she'd scold,
And vow if she lived to be ninety years old
She *never* would learn to sew!

III

Gladys Mehitable Arabelle Jane,
Who never would learn to sew —
Oh, a terrible thing befell the child!
She was sent to live in a desert wild,
By her godmother fay, who was heard to swear
She'd reform the chit or she'd leave her there!
'T was a Mexican desert where Arabelle went,
And shelter she had none, not even a tent.
Her task was to gather her teardrops and soak
The Needle-and-Thread Tree! Dear me, what a joke
On a child who so "*hated*" to sew!

IV

Gladys Mehitable Arabelle Jane,
Who never would learn to sew,
Draws her needles now from a cactus leaf,
And her thread unwinds from a prickly sheaf!

She does it with care, and they've taught her to sing,
"Oh, 't is sewing I love above everything!"
Her needles are thorns and they're shining and long,
Her thread is a fiber and marvelous strong:
And all day long on the desert sands
She mournfully chants o'er her gussets and bands —
This Gladys who never would sew!

V

Gladys Mehitable Arabelle Jane,
Who never would learn to sew,
Tends the Needle Tree in the desert drear,
But her other tasks not so sweet appear.
She mends the crown of the fat horned toad;
The lizard's tail, if it snaps in the road;
The scorpion's claws she bastes on tight,
And the spider's webs she darns by night.
She's the tailor for snake and for bumblebee.
Oh, ever, eternally busy is she,
This Gladys who "*hated*" to sew!

PEDDLING POETRY

THERE was once a lad, but I'll not disclose
His Christian or surname, who early rose
To fame and to honor and gained renown
For his native place, which was Boston town,
By his wit, his wisdom, his gifted pen
And the priceless inventions he gave to men.
Fifteenth bud on the parent tree,
Brothers and sisters to spare had he.
His father, a maker of candles and soap,
His brother, a printer, — I think I may hope
That the name of the lad can be quickly told
By every American, young or old.
The boy was a reader and day and night
He studied by fire and candle-light,
In yellowing books that he scarce could hold
Romances and stories of heroes bold.
His brain was a field where gallants dared,
Where war-steeds trampled and heroes fared.
Now out of these visions he strove to frame,
In musical verse that should bear his name

Weird tales of adventure on sea and land;
Of Blackbeard bold and his pirate band,
Of haunted houses and dungeons deep, —
Such things as would make your flesh to creep!
The elder brother struck off the verse, —
"*The Lighthouse Terror*," "*The Pirate's Curse*,"
From his printing-presses and up and down
Through the paths and pastures of Boston town,
The proud little poet pursued his way,
Crying "Verses! Who'll buy any verse to-day?"
The jingles were purchased both far and near
Till the noise of them came to the father's ear,
And reading them all, 'twixt a smile and a frown,
He said with his spectacles twinkling down
On the reddening cheek of his fifteenth hope,
"As a cure for your ailment, we'll try Doctor Pope,
For he who has once tasted Pope and admired
His elegant verses hath never desired
To take up the art for himself, unless he
A similar master of English can be."
Thus spoke the wise father and gave to the lad
The dose he thought fitting for verse that was bad.
The cure was effective and never again
Did the lad scribble verse with his eloquent pen.

He grew to be famous, America's pride;
A nation mourned over his grave when he died.
Now who was this statesman of great renown
Who peddled his verses in Boston town?

THE LITTLE ARTIST

(*From the German of Froebel*)

Come, little one, quite close to me,
Lean softly here against my knee,
And you and I will draw to-day
The pretty things you see at play.
We'll make the bird with glancing wings,
As high above the hill she sings;
We'll make the plum-tree and the nest
Where all her bright-eyed birdlings rest.
Now draw a scampering, silky mouse,
And in the corner here, a house.
We'll make the staircase built within,
The windows where the sun shines in;
We'll roof the house with crimson tiles
And draw in front tall trees in files.
We'll make the mirrors on its walls,
The tables laid for festivals,
And everything within shall be,
My little one, for you and me.

Now sketch the bridge where children go
Across the brook that winds below;
Next try to make a ladder long,
And mother's scissors sharp and strong.
Now let me guide your hand, my dear,
And we will make a dovecote here,
The farmer's doves all flutt'ring round,
The chickens and the worm they've found,
The rabbits in their cozy hutch,
The saw the farmer needs so much,
His harrow and his shining plow,
His cart with hay for mooly-cow,
The axle, spoke, and tire, and wheel,
His water-jug for noon-day meal.
Now let us draw the great, round sun,
The stars that shine when bedtime 's come,
And then the eye that sees their light,
Bright-beaming in the sky of night;
A thousand, thousand stars like these
We see when snow hides grass and trees.
Next we will make the baby moon
And then the sphere she'll be so soon;
Now last of all the great church door,
And then the drawing lesson 's o'er.

These pictures, dear, may not last long,
But practice makes the fingers strong;
And as the world without they show,
The world within will clearer grow.

THE FEAST OF THE DOLL

In flow'ry Japan, the home of the fan,
The land of the parasol,
Each month has its feast, from greatest to least,
And March is the Feast of the Doll-doll-doll,
And March is the Feast of the Doll.

The wee, slippered maid in gown of brocade,
The baby with shaven poll,
The little brown lad in embroidery clad,
All troop to the Feast of the Doll-doll-doll,
All troop to the Feast of the Doll.

How pleasant 't would be, 'neath an almond-tree,
In sunshine and perfume to loll,
Forget our own spring, with its wind and its sting,
And sing to the praise of the Doll-doll-doll,
And sing to the praise of the Doll!

Come, sweet Tippytoes, as pink as a rose,
And white as a cotton-boll,
Let us follow the plan of the folk in Japan,
And dance for your Feast, little Doll-doll-doll,
And dance for your Feast, little Doll.

THE FEAST OF ARMS

R-R-R-AT-TAT-TAT! R-R-R-AT-TAT-TAT!
The sound makes your heart go pit-a-pat.
The drums are beating, the flag's unfurled
And shakes its folds at the great round world.
A warrior brave goes marching by,
With a sleek black head, held straight and high,
With a smooth brown cheek and an almond eye
And a gown that glows like a butterfly.
Hurrah! Hurrah! Banzai!!

Dr-r-um-tum-tum! Dr-r-um-tum-tum!
Like a hive of bees is the muttered hum,
'T is the Feast of Arms in a Japanese Town,
And the envious Sun sees, looking down,
A warrior brave go marching by,
With a sleek black head, held straight and high,
With a smooth brown cheek and an almond eye
And a gown that glows like a butterfly.
Hurrah! Hurrah! Banzai!!

Tr-r-ap-tap-tap! Tr-r-ap-tap-tap!
The drumsticks rattle, the fingers snap.

THE FEAST OF ARMS

For a thousand years has the Japanese lad
On the Fifth of May been in armor clad;
So a warrior brave goes marching by,
With a sleek black head, held straight and high,
With a smooth brown cheek and an almond eye
And a gown that glows like a butterfly.
Hurrah! Hurrah! Banzai!!

Tr-r-ump-tump-tump! Tr-r-ump-tump-tump!
From field and lane sounds the distant thump —
A golden carp is his ensign bold
And he wears his sword like a knight of old.
Oh, warrior brave, go marching by,
With your sleek black head, held straight and high,
With your smooth brown cheek and your almond eye
And your gown that glows like a butterfly.
Hurrah! Hurrah! Banzai!!

THE FEAST OF LAUGHTER

'T is the very first "day of the hare"
In Wasa, the province of Kishu,
And the breezes that sweep through the town
Depart all a-ripple with laughter —
With light-hearted, musical laughter.

The month is the tenth in Japan,
In Wasa, the province of Kishu,
And the leaves of the bamboo are stirred,
And the sugar-cane trembles with laughter —
With rustle and tinkle of laughter.

The brown baby smiles in his sleep,
In Wasa, the province of Kishu;
While the fathers ha-ha at their work,
The mothers' lips bubble with laughter —
With honey-sweet, mellow-toned laughter.

Shall I tell you why mirth is abroad
In Wasa, the province of Kishu?
Why the owls in the deep, gloomy shade,
And the toad in his hole, shake with laughter —
With silver-shrill, jubilant laughter?

. . . . . .

Listen all who listen can,
And hear this tale of old Japan!
Ages ago the thing befell,
But people still the story tell.

. . . . . .

'T was in the misty long-ago,
  Ere yet this gray old earth
Had grown too staid and sober
  To indulge o'ermuch in mirth.
To the sacred shrines of Isè,
  Where Izumo's walls appear
Purple-clad, the gods assembled
  In the tenth month every year.
All affairs of love and wedlock
  In the whole land of Japan
There were mooted, there were settled,
  On a wise celestial plan.

At the first one of these meetings,
  Having half forgot the date,
When the grand debate was over
  Certain gods arrived too late!
Sympathy nor pity gave they —
  Brother gods in parliament —

Ridiculed the tardy comers,
Every one on laughing bent.

Since that time in all the district,
On the "first day of the hare,"
Ancient men and toddling children
Unto Isè's shrines repair.
Journey ended, all the graybeards
Face the curious, wond'ring throng:
"Laugh, ye bright-eyes! Laugh, ye sweet-lips!
Laugh and jest the whole day long!"
Ready smiles break out in answer
On each satin, dusky cheek;
Hands are clapping, feet are dancing,
Dimples playing hide-and-seek.

Laughing hear the feathered people,
Laughs the sun as he looks down,
And, the sweet contagion spreading,
Laughter rings through all the town.

THE DOLL'S CALENDAR[1]

January

Was ever a doll like my Dolladine,
The charmingest dolly that ever was seen!
Eyes as blue as the sky at noon,
Hair as bright as the summer moon,
Dolladine, my dear!

She came to me in December last;
To the Christmas-tree they had bound her fast;
My heart beat high when I saw her face,
And I squeezed her tight, thro' her silk and lace,
Dolladine, my dear!

I'm the thoughtfullest mother that ever was known;
I'd scorn to leave Dolladine, darling, alone;
Each month of the twelve I invent her a play,
And I give her a flower to wear every day,
Dolladine, my dear!

On the very first day of the year just begun,
I wove her some snow-shoes, and when they were done,

[1] Published by G. Schirmer, with music by Isadore Luckstone.

A fine sled I made her, to slide at her will,
To skim o'er the valley and whiz down the hill,
Dolladine, my dear!

Fresh blossoms in winter come just a bit high,
And there are n't any flower-shops very near by;
So my pet wears a garland of fir and of pine,
And under the green how her starry eyes shine!
Dolladine, my dear, my sweet!
Dolladine, my own!

February

February, dark and chilly,
Comes with dripping rain,
Noon of day and midnight stilly,
Tapping on the pane.

Dolladine is growing older,
Precious doll of mine;
And to-day my love I've told her,
In a valentine.

Cherry blossoms she is wearing,
Sent her from the west.

Tell me, can you, why she's bearing
These upon her breast?

March

Pussy with the silver fur;
Willow, pussy willow!
Dollie wants to hear you purr;
Willow, pussy willow!

Kites are sailing in the sky;
Willow, pussy willow!
Wind is tossing branches high;
Willow, pussy willow!

March has come, 't is time to blow;
Willow, pussy willow!
All your glossy kits to show;
Willow, pussy willow!

April

A rain-pool lies just over the way,
And on it a fairy boat;
And there, in her craft of the birchen bark
My dollie's a sailor afloat.

Row, row, Dolladine, now!
April is steering and Spring 's at the bow.

With Dandelions the prow is decked,
All gay on the rain-pool sea,
And a chain I've made of their shining stems,
To draw Dollie back to me.

Row, row, pretty one, now!
April is steering and Spring's at the bow.

May

May is coming, listen! hark!
Flowers growing dawn and dark.
Dollie's playing in the grass,
Bees about her humming pass;
Lilacs in her yellow hair,
Breath of lilacs everywhere.
Let us set a May-pole here,
Where the daisy buds appear;
Let us garland it about,
Weave with blossoms in and out.
Then I'll wreathe a flow'ry crown,
Make a regal robe and gown.

Who of May shall be the queen?
Who but precious Dolladine!

June

Dollie and I in the sweet June weather,
A rose of June in her hair.
Dollie and I in the swing together;
Oh, the rush of the swing in the air!

Strawberries ripening down in the meadow,
A strawberry is her mouth.
Buttercups swaying in sun and shadow;
Oh, soft is the wind of the south!

If but June weather might last forever,
Warm as the heart of my dear,
And birds and blossoms, in sweet endeavor,
Might grow side by side for a year!

July

The poppy glows in the garden bed,
For it is July.
The poppy's drooping her drowsy head,
For it is July.
Blue sky, flags high,
Hot July.

The poppy 's the only one to sleep,
For it is July.
The world is too noisy for slumber deep,
For it is July.
Blue sky, flags high,
Gay July.

Dolladine 's wearing a Liberty cap,
For it is July.
She'll march when she hears the drummer's tap,
For it is July.
Blue sky, flags high,
Our July.

August

It really makes me very sad
To tell the illness dollie's had.
The causes were not wholly plain,
But remedies were all in vain;
And doctors said that she must go
Down where the ocean breezes blow.

At home the lilies are in bloom,
Here sea-winds give the sole perfume.

And Dolladine is growing brown
As dry leaves when they flutter down.
Gone are her ills, forgotten quite.
Deep in the sand they hide from sight.

I've made of her a mermaid fair.
A veil of sea-weed shrouds her hair.
A rope of sea-shells decks her gown,
Low falling, all her drapery down.
In the whole world of waters green,
There's naught so fair as Dolladine.

September

Do you know of a fairy maiden,
All in the olden time,
Who rode in a pumpkin carriage,
Like a Christmas pantomime?
Such a Cinder-maid is dollie,
Such a pumpkin coach has she,
And she's off to the royal palace,
The prince himself to see.

Jack-o-Lanterns light the ball,
'T is a night entrancing.

Golden-rod bedecks the hall,
Crickets play for dancing.

No crystal shoe has dollie,
But her foot is like a fay's,
And of all the folk at the party,
None can better tread the maze.
She 'll return ere the hour of midnight,
Her godmamma to see,
The fairy who built her carriage;
Can you guess who this may be?

Jack-o-Lanterns light the ball,
'T is a night entrancing.
Golden-rod bedecks the hall,
Crickets play for dancing.

October

Autumn's coming o'er the hill,
Treading fast and faster.
Soon his foot will cross the sill,
Autumn's coming o'er the hill.
Where the summer lingers still,
Blooms the purple aster.

Autumn's coming o'er the hill,
Treading fast and faster.

Through the rustling leaves she goes,
Dolladine, my dollie.
Summer's lent her cheek a rose,
Through the rustling leaves she goes.
Down the frosty wind there blows
Autumn's laughter jolly;
Through the rustling leaves she goes,
Dolladine, my dollie.

November

The Indian chieftain smokes his pipe,
The hills with haze are murky.
And yonder struts, with spreading tail,
The grand Thanksgiving turkey.

Oh ho! Oh ho! how happy we'll be,
When the cousins come to dollie and me!

Dollie shall wear a cranberry chain,
And her very best new bonnet;
The one with a buckle, a puff and a bow,
And a curly feather on it.

Oh ho! Oh ho! how happy we'll be,
When the cousins come to dollie and me!

The house is ready, the fires blaze,
We fear not cold November.
By the hearth we'll sit and stories tell,
And good old times remember.

Oh ho! Oh ho! how happy we'll be,
When the cousins come to dollie and me!

December

It is the eve of Christmas Day,
And thick and fast it's snowing.
With dollie cuddled in my lap,
I watch the white flakes blowing.
Long, long ago I bought her gift,
A holly wreath I've made her,
And I shall hang her stocking up
When safe in bed I've laid her.
Dear Santa Claus, whate'er you bring,
Of all your Christmas blisses,
You ne'er can bring to me again
So sweet a doll as this is.

My lamb she is, my dear delight,
My darling and my treasure;
Of all the joys the year has brought,
The very chiefest pleasure.

THE END

The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
U . S . A

2-- PZ8.3 .S655 1920
3 [redacted] 000 740 672

WITHDRAWN

DATE DUE

PZ8.3
.S655 Smith, N.A.
1920 The Christmas child

GETS

DATE	ISSUED TO

RETT - EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY LIBRARY
2121 Sheridan Road
Evanston, Illinois 60201

T3-CFJ-699